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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editors are not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer to insure publication.

THE NURSE AND THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEAR EDITOR: There are few organizations, if any, existing today which have a greater opportunity for service to their fellow citizens and their country than has The American Legion. For nearly half a century the Grand Army of the Republic was perhaps the greatest single force in the United States. In the main it was a splendid, well administered force. Our life as a people would have been distinctly poorer without it. Splendid as has been the elder organization, the newcomer has even greater possibilities of service. In the heyday of its strength, the Grand Army had a membership of less than 500,000 while the American Legion has already a membership in excess of a million, and a possible membership of four and a half millions. Properly directed, unselfishly and patriotically guided, one can readily see what a wonderful stabilizing element for the welfare of our country it can be. Unlike the Grand Army, the American Legion has made eligible to full and complete membership a certain group whose coöperation and support are much desired. I refer to the nurses who were regularly enlisted in either the Army, the Navy or the Marine Corps. This does not include the Red Cross nurses as such, for while their service was fine, they were not a part of the military establishment of the United States, but only those nurses regularly enlisted and subject to military orders. To these, the Legion extends its most cordial greeting of fellowship. The Department of Maine has endeavored to make us feel that we are most welcome; that it desired not only our membership, but also our active interest and coöperation in the business affairs and social diversions of the Posts. It has urged us to join the regular Posts and not form Posts of our own, even when our numbers would warrant a separate Post. We believe that by joining the regular Posts, we can better maintain and perpetuate that spirit of comradeship of the war days. On its delegation to the National Convention of the Legion at Kansas City, this Department placed two nurses, one a Navy nurse, the other an Army nurse. The result was very satisfactory and will doubtless become a precedent. I hope that every Department will place on its delegation to the Convention at New Orleans one or more nurses. There is quite a possibility that a nurse will be elected one of the National Vice-Commanders. Whether we served in the camps of this country or of the A. E. F., the naval bases or in the field and evacuation hospitals of the near front, it makes no difference to the American Legion. The Legion recognizes no distinction of place of service. The sense of comradeship between the men and women who served in the military forces of the United States was one of the beneficial developments of the war. In our everyday life, there is but one medium through which that fine spirit of comradeship and mutual helpfulness of war days can be preserved—that is through the American Legion. In the excellent programme of service which the Legion has adopted, we should do our part. This programme is in three parts. First, Care of the sick and disabled veterans. The Sweet Bill provides proper benefits for the disabled, but the Legion must see to it that they individually receive the benefits to which they are entitled. Second, Aid to the financially disabled. A serious unemployment situation confronts the country. The Legion is endeavoring to ameliorate this situation and aid the

ex-service men and women to rehabilitate themselves in gainful occupations. Third, The problem of Americanism. The war disclosed the fact that 24.9 per cent of those examined for the draft could not read English; that large groups of our population had no sympathy with our ideals, or desire to be assimilated in our nation. The Legion is vigorously attacking this problem. In this programme, the Legion asks the coöperation of the nurses. We must devote to the problems of peace some of the high purpose and spirit we devoted to the problems of war. The work of the Legion is a very necessary work. The American Legion needs the nurse—the nurse needs the American Legion.

THELMA SELFIDGE, R.N.

THE PACIFIER

DEAR EDITOR: Is a "pacifier" too small a thing for our National Organization of Nurses to take up? It is about the size of a thimble when it first goes into the babies mouth, but by the time it has done all the harm it is reported to be capable of doing one might think of it as the size of an aeroplane. We see these pacifiers by the hundreds on the streets, in the homes, and at our baby clinics. The mothers are warned against them after the child has already formed the habit. It seems to me we are beginning at the wrong end of the line. Why not educate the manufacturers as to the harm they do and persuade them to discontinue making them. I have thought of looking up their names and addresses and writing them, but what good would only one petition do? If our organization representing fifty thousand nurses could take it up, couldn't we soon wipe them off the face of our country? I am trying to educate the people in Mercer County. I bought out one druggist at cost, bought the pacifiers and rubber tubing for nursing bottles. He was surprised at the up-to-date ideas and quite willing to coöperate. I have written to the Women's Federated Clubs of North Dakota to see whether they will help to make a raid on them in this State.

North Dakota

M. D. B.

JOURNALS ON HAND

MISS K. Toomey, 1088 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, Conn., writes that she has on hand a complete set of *Journals* for 1920, which anyone may have by paying the postage on them. She will hold them for a limited time.

Miss Lucy M. Bushey, American Red Cross, The Court House, Fort Wayne, Indiana, will give all, or any part, of the following *Journals* to anyone willing to pay transportation on them: October, 1913; May, July, November, 1917; April, 1918; July, November, December, 1919; entire year, 1920; and entire year, 1921.